THE MENTOR

SERIAL NUMBER 37

THE CONQUEST OF THE POLES

BY

REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT E. PEARY

Discoverer of the North Pole

FRIDTJOF NANSEN · SIR ERNEST H. SHACKLETON
DUKE OF THE ABRUZZI · ROALD AMUNDSEN
ROBERT E. PEARY · ROBERT FALCON SCOTT

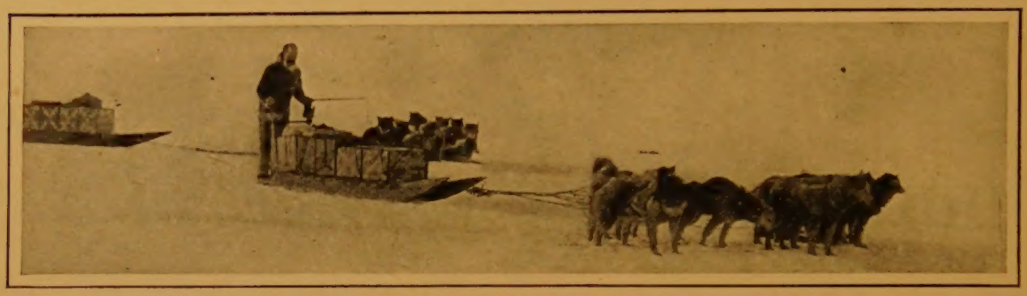
TEN years ago many, perhaps the majority, of intelligent people doubted if the Poles of the earth would ever be reached by man. From east to west, and west to east, the world seemed small. Jules Verne's "Round the World in Eighty Days" dream of not so many years ago had been cut in two; but from north to south the world still stretched in apparently unattainable infinity.

Within the last four years the two Poles have been reached three times, and in their attainment the globe has shrunk to commonplace dimensions. With the attainment of the Poles the climax of polar discovery has been reached, the last of the splendid series of great world voyages and mighty adventures has been finished. But while the glamour, the mystery, the speculation, as to what exists at the ends of the earth are gone, the work of detailed exploration, of continuous scientific observations and investigations, will continue until to the scientist and geographer the polar regions will be as well known as the more favored regions of the earth.

EARLY POLAR EXPLORATION

It is nearly four hundred years (1526) since the first recorded expedition went forth to seek the North Pole under the initiative of England.

Trade, the great prize of the commerce of the opulent East, land lust, and the spirit of adventure in turn played their part as incentives for the earlier expeditions. It seems to be generally accepted that nothing had a more powerful influence on the work than England's determination to have a trade route of her own to the riches of the East, independent of the southern routes controlled by Spain and Portugal. It was



TRAVELING IN THE FAR NORTH

Dog sledges used by Peary on his expedition to the North Pole.

this determination that made the terms Northeast Passage and Northwest Passage historic, and brought about years of search that, though latterly scientific, have been largely the acme of adventure and sentiment.

From the misty date of Pytheas (325 B. C.) down through the succeeding centuries, the record of polar exploration contains much of interest, of mystery, of superstition, followed by some of the grandest epics, most heroic efforts and sacrifices, and somberest catastrophes and tragedies in all the wide field of exploration. Briton and Scandinavian, Teuton and Latin, Slav and Magyar, and American, have entered the lists and struggled for the prize.

In the earlier years of this long record occurred the strange voyages of the Zeni, and Eric the Red, Icelandic outlaw, with his discovery and colonization of Greenland,—strange stories of hot springs in that far country, with which the monks warmed their monastery and cooked their food; a tribute of walrus tusks toward the expenses of the Crusades; tales of the rich green pastures, and herds of grazing cattle, of these colonists, and later their mysterious and complete disappearance, leaving only a scattered ruin here and there to show that they ever existed.

THE ROOSEVELT

Peary's ship, in which he sailed to discover the North Pole.

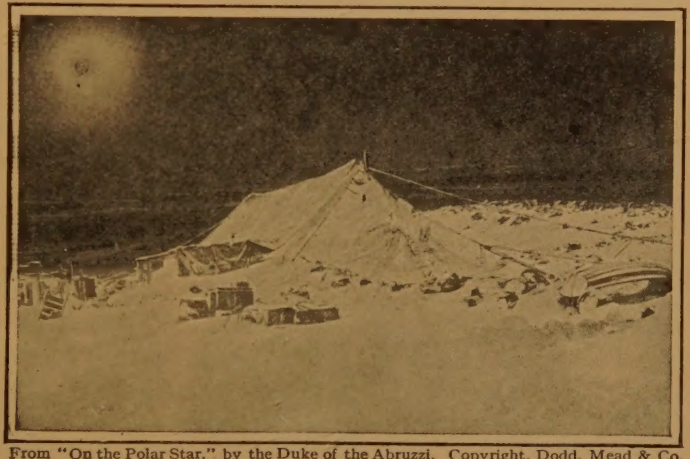
ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS

Beginning with the earliest authentic expedition (1526), it is possible to touch only on the most important inci-

dents of the record of this later phase of the subject. The time from 1526 to date may be roughly and generally divided into three periods:

The first, from 1526, the time of the first North Polar expedition by England, to about 1853, the close of Great Britain's Franklin search expeditions. In this period the preponderance of British efforts over those of all other nations combined was so great as almost to obscure them and make this period preëminently British.

In this period British navigators essayed every route to the polar regions, attempted the Northeast and Northwest Passages again and again, and wrote some of the most brilliant pages of Great Britain's history over the names of Hudson, Davis, Baffin, Ross, Parry, Franklin, McClintock, and others.



From "On the Polar Star," by the Duke of the Abruzzi. Copyright, Dodd, Mead & Co.

THE HUT OF THE DUKE OF THE ABRUZZI

From a photograph taken by moonlight in the Arctic regions.

The second period covers from about 1850 to 1895. In this period other nations—the United States, Germany, Austria, Sweden, and Norway—showed equal activity with Great Britain, and the names of Kane, Hayes, Hall, Lockwood, Brainard (United States), Nares and Markham (Great Britain), Koldewey and Weyprecht (Germany), Payer (Austria), Nordenskjöld (Sweden), and others were written indelibly into Arctic history. In this period the record of farthest north which had been held by Great Britain was wrested from her in 1882 by Lockwood and Brainard of the United States.

THE NORTH POLE ATTAINED

The third period is from 1895 to date. In this period, while other valuable work was being done,—as Amundsen's navigation of the Northwest Passage, Sverdrup's extensive discoveries in the North American archipelago, Erichsen's completion of the last gap in the north Greenland coast line,—three men, Nansen, Abruzzi, and Peary, each having for his object the attainment of the North Pole, pushed in succession far beyond the farthest of their predecessors, penetrating the inmost regions of the north, and the last named attaining the Pole which had been the prize of centuries.

Briefly summarized, from 1526 to 1882 Great Britain held the palm of nearest approach to the Pole, slowly pushing the record up till Markham reached 83° 20′ north latitude. Then the lead came to the United States with Lockwood and Brainard's 83° 24′. In 1895 Norway went to the front in a great leap in Nansen's 86° 14′, and in 1900 Italy grasped the blue ribbon with Abruzzi's 86° 33′. In 1906 the United States took the lead again with Peary's 87° 6′, and finally closed the record with his attainment of the Pole on April 6 and 7, 1909.

From "On the Polar Star," by the Duke of the Abruzzi. Copyright, Dodd, Mead & Co.

THE POLAR STAR

Landing the stores while the ship was nipped by the ice.

ANTARCTIC EXPLORATION

The exploration of the Antarctic regions dates back much less far than that of the Arctic. In 1772 Captain James Cook first crossed the Antarctic Circle and penetrated the Antarctic regions. After him came the Russian Bellingshausen in 1819, who discovered the first land within the Antarctic Circle. Then came Weddell the British sealer, who in 1823 pushed his sailing ship south into the great bight southeast of Cape Horn, named after him Weddell Sea, to 74° 15′ south latitude, 241 miles beyond Cook's record, and not exceeded in that region until the last year. At Weddell's farthest *no land or field ice was to be seen*, and only three icebergs were in sight.

In 1839-1841 occurred the important voyage of Sir James Ross. Ross a few years before had located the North Magnetic Pole. He was now in command of the Erebus and Terror, two ships that a few years later were to bear the Franklin expedition to its fate near the same North Magnetic Pole. Ross discovered South Victoria Land, directly south of New Zealand, with its long stretch of southerly trending savage coast line from Cape Adare to 78° 10′ south latitude, where he found an active volcano, Mt. Erebus. From here Ross followed the edge of the great ice barrier some three hundred miles to the eastward. The great indentation in the Antarctic continent thus discovered and navigated by Ross, and named after him Ross Sea, has

since been the base of operations from which the South Pole was twice attained.

"FARTHEST SOUTH"

After Ross came various minor expeditions contributing to the knowledge of the Antarctic regions, and in the 1890's began a renaissance of Antarctic interest and exploration. In 1892, 1893, 1894 Scottish, German, and Norwegian whalers reconnoitered the Antarctic seas of Ross and Weddell in search of new whaling grounds, and in 1894 the first landing was made upon the Antarctic continent by some members of Bull's Norwegian crew; in 1895 Newmayer introduced in the sixth Geographical Congress in London a resolution upon the importance of Antarctic exploration; and in the years following there was an international attack upon the problem by Belgium, Great Britain, Germany, Scotland, Sweden, and France. In 1898, for the first time in the history of Antarctic exploration, an expedition (the Belgian under Commander de Gerlache), passed a winter within the Antarctic Circle beset in the ice; and a year later, in 1899, a British expedition under Borchgrevink passed a winter on the Antarctic continent itself, and made at Cape Adare, in Ross Sea, the first attempt at land exploration.

REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT E. PEARY

AT THE NORTH POLE

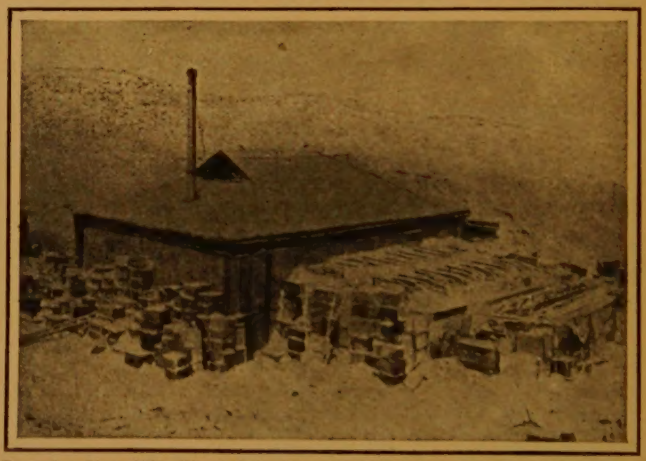
Photograph taken at the "Top of the World."

In 1901-1902 a German expedition under Drygalski determined a new part of the coast of the Antarctic continent south of Africa, and three others, under Bruce of Scotland, Nordenskjöld of Swe-

den, and Charcot of France, made valuable discoveries in Weddell Sea, and the regions southeast, south, and southwest of Cape Horn. In 1901-1903 Scott of Great Britain, selecting the Ross Sea region discovered by Ross sixty years before as his base, effected the first serious land exploration of the Antarctic continent. In a magnificent sledge journey he covered three hundred and eighty miles due south, reaching a point within four hundred and thirty-seven miles of the South Pole. Following Scott, his lieutenant, Shackleton, in 1908-09, using essentially the same base and route as Scott, made an even more brilliant journey, and reached a point within ninety-seven miles of the Pole, January 9, 1909. At that time this was the "farthest south" record.

THE SOUTH POLE

The successes of Scott and Shackleton still further stimulated interest in the Antarctic problem, and in 1910 and 1911 Great Britain, Norway, Germany, Australia, and Japan sent expeditions into the field; the United States unfortunately, as in the past, being unrepresented. Four of these expeditions—the Japanese, Australian, Norwegian, and British—selected the Ross Sea region south of New Zealand and Aus-



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SHACKLETON'S EXPEDITION

The hut in the early winter quarters near Mt. Erebus, the Antarctic volcano.

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THE "FARTHEST SOUTH" CAMP AFTER A SIXTY-HOUR BLIZZARD

Reproduced from "The Heart of the Antarctic," by Sir Ernest H. Shackleton. Copyright, J. B. Lippincott Co.

SHACKLETON'S SHIP, THE NIMROD

Moored to a stranded iceberg about a mile from winter quarters, the Nimrod was sheltered from blizzards.

SHACKLETON AND HIS SON

tralia for their work; while the German expedition selected the Weddell Sea region southeast of Cape Horn, the most promising of all points of attack upon the Antarctic continent. All these expeditions have now returned. The Japanese expedition explored an unknown section of the coast of King Edward VII Land east of Ross Sea, the Australian expedition explored a long stretch of Wilkes Land west of Ross Sea, the German expedition made new discoveries in Weddell Sea, reaching a point farther south than ever before attained in that region; while Amundsen's Norwegian expedition, from its base in the southeast angle of Ross Sea, attained the South Pole, December 14 to 17, 1911, and Scott's British expedition, from its base in the southwest angle of Ross Sea, attained it a month later, January 18, 1912, Scott and his four companions dying of cold and starvation on the return.

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DISCOVERERS OF THE SOUTH MAGNETIC POLE

Part of Shackleton's expedition reached for the first time the South Magnetic Pole —that is, where the south part of the compass needle points. Those in the picture, reading from left to right, are Dr. Mackay, Professor David, and Douglas Mawson.

The record of Antarctic exploration from 1772 to date may be divided into two periods; the first from 1772 to 1898 and 1899, a period of summer voyages only, the

work carried on entirely by ships, with no land or sledge work, and no attempt to winter in that region. During this period, though other nations, notably the United States and France, took part in the work, the work of Great Britain was so pronouncedly preponderant as to more than equal all the others combined. The second period is from 1899 to date, and is the period of overland exploration with sledges. In this period, as in the last period of Arctic exploration, three men, Scott, Shackleton, and Amundsen, each having for his object the attainment of the South Pole, pushed so far beyond all predecessors as to be in a class by themselves, two of them, Amundsen and Scott, actually reaching the Pole.

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NANSEN'S EXPEDITION

Digging the Fram out of the ice.

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AMUNDSEN IN POLAR COSTUME

Discoverer of the South Pole.

THE POLAR REGIONS—A COMPARISON

After the foregoing condensed résumé of Arctic and Antarctic exploration and discovery, I feel sure the reader will be interested in noting some of the striking contrasts between the two Poles and their surroundings. These contrasts are as great as the Poles are far apart. The North Pole is situated in an ocean of some fifteen hundred miles' diameter, surrounded by land. The South Pole is situated in a continent of some twenty-five hundred miles' diameter, surrounded by water. At the North Pole, Peary stood upon the frozen surface

From "On the Polar Star," by the Duke of the Abruzzi. Copyright, Dodd, Mead & Co.

ENTRANCE TO HUT

A "home" in the polar regions.

of an ocean *more than two miles in depth.* At the South Pole, Amundsen and Scott stood upon the surface of a great elevated snow plateau *more than two miles above sea level.* The lands that surround the North Polar Ocean have comparatively abundant life, musk oxen, reindeer, polar bears, wolves, foxes, arctic hares, ermines, and lemmings, together with insects and flowers, being found less than five hundred miles from the Pole. On the great South Polar continent no form of animal life is found.

Permanent human life exists within some seven hundred miles of the North Pole; none is found within twenty-three hundred miles of the South Pole. The history of Arctic exploration goes back nearly four hundred years. The history of Antarctic efforts covers one hundred and forty years. The record of Arctic exploration is studded with crushed and foundering ships, and the deaths of hundreds of brave men. The record of Antarctic exploration shows the loss of but one ship, and the death of a dozen men.

For all those who aspire to the North Pole, the road lies over the frozen surface of an ocean, the ice on which breaks up completely every summer, drifting about under the influence of wind and tide, and may crack into numerous fissures and lanes of open water at any time, even in the depth of the severest

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AT THE SOUTH POLE—PHOTOGRAPHED BY AMUNDSEN

winter, under the influence of storms. For those who aspire to the South Pole, the road lies over an eternal, immovable surface, the latter part rising ten thousand and eleven thousand feet above sea level. And herein lies the inestimable advantage to the South Polar explorer which enables him to make his depots at convenient distances, and thus lighten his load and increase his speed.

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IN MEMORY OF BRAVE MEN

The cross erected on Observation Hill to Scott and his courageous companions.

THE FUTURE OF POLAR EXPLORATION

The efforts and successes of the last fifteen years in the Antarctic regions ought to, and I hope will, spur us as individuals, as societies, and as a nation to do all in our power to enable the United States to take its proper part and share in the great work yet to be done in that field. There are three ways in which this country could make up for its past lethargy in regard to Antarctic work, and take front rank at once in this attractive field.

One is to *establish a station at the South Pole* for a year's

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PRECEDED BY AMUNDSEN

When Captain Scott and his party reached the South Pole they found that Amundsen had been there before them. Captain Scott is peering into the tent left by Amundsen's expedition.

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THE THREE POLAR STARS

A photograph of Captain Roald Amundsen, Sir Ernest H. Shackleton, and Rear Admiral Robert E. Peary, taken at Philadelphia, January 16, 1913.

continuous observations in various fields of scientific investigation. With the practical experience in methods of travel and transportation now at the command of the United States as the result of our last twenty-five years of North Polar work, this would not be so difficult as it may seem to the layman.

Another is to inaugurate and carry out, in a special ship, with a corps of experts, through a period of several seasons, a complete and systematic survey and study of the entire circumference of the Antarctic continent with its adjacent oceans, with up to date equipment and methods. This plan would probably be the most attractive to scientists, as it would secure a large harvest of new and valuable material to enrich our museums and keep our specialists busy for years. It would also be the most expensive.

The third would be the thorough exploration of the Weddell Sea region southeast of Cape Horn, which is specially within our sphere of interest, together with a sledge traverse from the most southern part of that sea to the South Pole. Such a traverse, with the journeys of Amundsen, Scott, and Shackleton from the opposite side, would give a complete transverse section across the Antarctic continent.

This last would promise the largest measure of broad results in the shortest time, and least expense, and would probably be the most attractive to geographers.

The successful accomplishment of any one of these ventures would put the United States in the front rank of Antarctic achievements.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING—"Nearest the Pole" and "The North Pole," Peary; "On the Polar Star," Duke of the Abruzzi; "The Heart of the Antarctic," Shackleton; "Farthest North," Fridtjof Nansen; "The Uttermost South—the Undying Story of Captain Scott," *Everybody's Magazine*, July, August, September, and October, 1913.

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Editorial

This week's issue of The Mentor and that of last week are so distinguished in authority that we ask special attention to them. An interesting article on the Conquest of the Poles could have been prepared by any good writer. The Mentor article was written by the supreme authority on the subject, Rear Admiral Robert E. Peary. The article on "Famous American Sculptors," published last week, was written by Mr. Lorado Taft, one of the best-known sculptors in America. When Mr. Taft writes about Barnard, French, Bartlett and the other American sculptors he is giving an account of his fellows in art. It is fortunate that so able and so interesting a critical writer on sculpture as Mr. Taft could be found among sculptors. He has given to us in The Mentor just what we want—information imparted in a simple, interesting way, and with authority.

★ ★ ★

It is worth a great deal to us to read what others have to say about The Mentor. It is a genuine satisfaction to receive from far-off California a message of "surprise and great delight over this 'wise and faithful guide and friend,' which surely fills a need in the lives of busy people." A friend nearer by, in Brooklyn, offers thanks for our "wonderful weekly. The pictures are lovely," she says. "Already I have shown it to many of my friends, and they are just as interested and pleased as I am. You most certainly deserve a vote of thanks from the people for placing this beautiful educational magazine within easy reach of everyone."

★ ★ ★

The thanks we appreciate, but what we value most is that our Brooklyn correspondent showed The Mentor to many of her friends and that they were just as pleased and interested as she was. A letter like that from every reader of The Mentor would mean an aggregate membership for The Mentor Association that would make it unique among the educational institutions of the world. There is a prospect that we hold fondly before us—that of every reader showing The Mentor to every friend that might be interested.

★ ★ ★

And then, when all of these friends have seen The Mentor, they will want the numbers from the beginning. We say they "will want" them, for that is what most of our subscribers demand. A teacher in Kansas writes, "The Mentor is a delight, and its value is beyond expression. I feel that I cannot miss a single issue, so please send me the numbers from the beginning." A teacher from Pittsburgh, immediately on receiving the first copy of the magazine, asks for all previous issues. An agent in insurance writes from Arkansas for the preceding numbers, adding, "I cannot afford to lose one copy."

★ ★ ★

So from St. Louis we hear, "Send me all preceding issues," and from New Haven a college student writes, "I like the publication so much that I do not wish to miss even one number." We lack space to cite all cases of this kind, but as we turn over the mail we find here a request from Toronto for "all numbers, beginning with the first," another from Charleston, and a third from Hyannis, Massachusetts, demanding "all preceding numbers."

★ ★ ★

It has become a regular daily incident, and it shows the unique character of The Mentor publication. It is not simply a magazine. Subscribers do not send for all back numbers of the ordinary magazine from the beginning of its existence. Every number of The Mentor is part of an interesting educational plan. The members of The Mentor Association want *all* parts of that plan.

FRIDTJOF NANSEN

ONE

DEATH or the west coast of Greenland!" A tall, fair Norwegian made this resolution in November, 1887, and one year later the great ice-bound continent of Greenland, the "Sahara of the North," was crossed for the first time. It was Fridtjof Nansen who accomplished this feat, in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties and terrible dangers. When he first proposed his plan famous scientists and seasoned explorers laughed at him. But Nansen was determined. Though his own government would not help him, a wealthy Dane had enough faith in the "madman," as he was called, to advance him $1,350 for his daring enterprise.

It was only after the greatest difficulty that Nansen and his party reached the east coast of Greenland at all in order to begin their land journey over the continent. They had to cross an ice stream ten miles wide to do it. Finally, however, they reached Umivik, and started on their hazardous journey across the desert of ice. Escapes from death were many. One day when they were more than halfway across Nansen was steering the first of the two sledges, which was rushing along under full sail.

"It was already growing dusk,' writes the great explorer himself, "when I suddenly saw in the general obscurity something dark lying right in our path. I took it for some ordinary irregularity in the snow, and unconcernedly steered straight ahead. The next moment, when I was within no more than a few yards, I found it to be something very different, and in an instant swung round sharp, and brought the sledge up to the wind. It was high time too; for we were on the very edge of a chasm broad enough to swallow comfortably sledges, steersmen, and passengers. Another second, and we should have disappeared for good and all."

Finally the west coast of Greenland was reached, on September 29, 1888, and the supposedly impossible had been accomplished.

Fridtjof Nansen was born near Christiania in Norway on October 10, 1861. His first Arctic voyage was made in 1882 in a sealing vessel. After he had successfully crossed Greenland he was appointed curator of the Museum of Comparative Anatomy in Christiania University. It was in 1893 that he made his thrilling attempt to reach the North Pole.

He had a ship built, the Fram, especially to withstand ice pressure, and sailed to the Polar Sea in the neighborhood of the New Siberian Islands. He figured that he would be drifted by a current over the Pole and would come out on the east side of Greenland. But, though he found that the current was in nearly the right direction, it would not carry him over the Pole; so he and one companion left the Fram at latitude 83° 59′ and started for the North Pole on foot.

On April 8, 1895, when they had reached 86° 14′, "farther north" than anyone up to that time had reached, they found that they would have to turn back. They managed to reach Franz Josef Land, where on June 17, 1896, they met part of another Arctic expedition.

When Nansen returned to Norway he was showered with medals and other honors. In 1905 he was appointed Norwegian minister at London.

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DUKE OF THE ABRUZZI

THE CONQUEST OF THE POLES

The Duke of the Abruzzi

TWO

IN olden times kings and princes were the warlike leaders of their countrymen, the doers of heroic deeds. Nowadays they are kept so busy thinking how to govern wisely that they don't get a chance to be heroes. But there is at least one prince of these modern times who has proved himself the equal if not the superior in bravery of any of those oldtime royal heroes. This is Prince Luigi Amadeo of Savoy-Aosta, Duke of the Abruzzi; whose full name, by the way, is Luigi Amadeo Giuseppe Maria Ferdinando Francesco.

Prince Luigi is an Italian, the son of Amadeo, ex-king of Spain. He was also a nephew of King Humbert of Italy, and therefore the first cousin of the present king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel. Luigi was born at Madrid, January 29, 1873. He studied at the naval college at Leghorn.

It was there that he first showed his truly democratic spirit. He preferred to be called by his first name, and never allowed himself to be addressed as "Duke" or "Royal Highness." From college he entered the Italian navy, where he made a good record for obedience and intelligence.

But to settle down as a mere prince or duke would never have satisfied one of Luigi's adventurous character. He wanted to do big things and accomplish dangerous deeds. His first exploit was the ascent of Mt. St. Elias in Alaska. Until he accomplished this in 1897 the great peak had never been scaled.

It was in 1900 that he led an expedition to the Arctic region which broke Nansen's "farthest north" record. Unfortunately the duke himself was severely frostbitten and could not leave the ship; but Captain Umberto Cagni reached latitude 86° 33′, and came nearer the Pole by a few miles than Nansen.

The Duke's ship, the Polar Star, sailed from Christiania on June 12, 1899. Seriously crushed by the ice, they had a hard task to prevent its sinking. But this was done, and Cagni with a party set out over the ice of the Arctic Ocean for the Pole. Their sufferings were terrible, and only heroic efforts brought them back alive. The expedition returned home in 1900, where honors were heaped upon them all.

But even these successes did not satisfy the royal adventurer. He looked around for other fields to conquer, and found that the loftiest peak in the Ruwenzori range in Africa, the "Mountains of the Moon" of Ptolemy, had never been scaled. He conquered this awe-inspiring height in 1906.

In 1909 he tried to conquer Mt. Godwin-Austen in the Himalayas. This peak is the second highest known in the world. It rises 28,250 feet in the air. The duke reached a little over 19,000 feet; but was compelled to give up the attempt. But he turned to Bride Peak, near at hand, rising 25,100 feet, and ascended it a distance of 24,580 feet, the world's record for altitude.

And notwithstanding the fact that he has accomplished so many big things and done so many brave deeds, the Duke of the Abruzzi is very modest, and rarely wears any of his innumerable decorations and medals.

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ROBERT E. PEARY

THREE

THE North Pole! One white man, a negro, and four Eskimos treading where never before had trodden human foot! And Old Glory flying free at the top of the world! That was on April 6, 1909. After years of such effort as only those can appreciate who have struggled with the frozen North, Robert E. Peary had reached the goal of which he had dreamed for a quarter of a century. The thought, the plan, the untiring effort, were all his, and now the everlasting glory and honor of the achievement were to be his also.

Robert E. Peary is a man peculiarly fitted by nature to be the discoverer of the North Pole. He was born in Pennsylvania on May 6, 1856. He comes of an old family of Maine lumbermen, an active, adventurous, outdoor stock of French-Anglo-Saxon origin. His father died when he was three years old, and his mother moved to Portland, Maine, where the boy grew up with the sea and its swimming, rowing, and sailing on one side of him, and the woods and fields to stimulate his love for nature on the other.

He graduated from Bowdoin College in 1877, second in a class of fifty-one. In college, besides being a brilliant student, he was a good athlete, being especially proficient in running, jumping, and walking. After graduating he was first a land surveyor, and then in 1879 secured a place in the Coast and Geodetic Survey at Washington. Then he was appointed a member of the Navy Department of Civil Engineering, with the rank of lieutenant. In the first year of his service (1881) he saved the government nearly thirty thousand dollars on a pier that he built at Key West, Florida. He was then sent to Nicaragua as sub-chief of the Interoceanic Canal Survey. There he learned to manage men; he gained experience in equipping expeditions, in making camp under adverse conditions, in traversing wild and unexplored country.

It was in 1885, on his return from Nicaragua, that the idea of Arctic exploration first came to him. He managed to secure leave of absence, and sailed in May, 1886. On this voyage he penetrated over a hundred miles into the interior of Greenland. Six years later he proved that Greenland was an island by crossing it and reaching its northern end.

After that he continued his explorations, in 1906 reaching 87° 6′, the "farthest north" anyone had yet gone, and in 1909 he reached the Pole. Here is how Peary describes his feelings after he knew that he had succeeded:

"But now," he writes in his book, "The North Pole," "while quartering the ice in various directions from our camp, I tried to realize that, after twenty-three years of struggles and discouragement, I had at last succeeded in placing the flag of my country at the goal of the world's desire. It is not easy to write about such a thing, but I knew that we were going back to civilization with the last of the great adventure stories,—a story the world had been waiting to hear for nearly four hundred years, a story that was to be told at last under the folds of the Stars and Stripes, the flag that during a lonely and isolated life had come to be for me the symbol of home and everything I loved—and might never see again."

By special act of Congress Peary was promoted to the rank of rear admiral and received the thanks of Congress. He has been awarded the premier medal of every prominent geographical society in the world.

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SIR ERNEST H. SHACKLETON

THE CONQUEST OF THE POLES

Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton

FOUR

ON March 24, 1909, all the world was thrilled by the news that on the ninth of January a point had been reached nearer the South Pole than had ever before been attained. Shackleton and three companions had penetrated the white waste of the Antarctic regions to within 111 miles of the Pole. The British Union Jack was flying at "farthest south." Shackleton started for the South Pole from Lyttelton, New Zealand, on New Year's Day, 1908, in the Nimrod. A new idea was introduced into polar exploration when the commander decided to depend on Manchurian ponies instead of dogs for transportation. A motorcar was also used to carry supplies. But both the ponies and the automobile were found wanting when it came to the test, as the ponies gave out, and the car could make no progress over the rough ice.

The first important thing that the Shackleton expedition accomplished was the ascent for the first time of Mt. Erebus, the southernmost volcano in the world, 13,120 feet high. The summit of this great peak was reached on March 10, 1908. An active crater was discovered half a mile in diameter and 8,000 feet deep. It was belching vast volumes of steam and sulphurous gas to a height of 2,000 feet.

Part of this expedition also reached the South Magnetic Pole; that is, where the south end of the compass needle points. This had never before been done.

Shackleton's dash for the South Pole is a record of hardships bravely borne and difficulties overcome. He and three others started from Cape Boyd on October 29, 1908. By November 30 they had been forced to shoot three of the ponies. Two days later an enormous glacier, 120 miles long and 40 miles wide, was discovered. Another pony was lost through a crevasse in the ice on December 7, and from then on each man had to haul 250 pounds.

Finally, on January 4, 1909, they decided to push on with only one tent. Then a fierce sixty-hour blizzard swooped down upon them, and held the party powerless for two days. They realized that they must turn back without reaching the Pole. It was a bitter disappointment to Shackleton to fail when they were within such a short distance of success. But, as he says, "We had honestly and truly shot our bolt at last," and if they were ever to return, it must be now.

On the morning of January 9, without the sledge, they made one last dash south, and planted at latitude 88° 23′ a flag given Shackleton by the queen, and the Union Jack. The journey back was then begun, and the ship reached on March 4.

Ernest Henry Shackleton was born in Ireland in 1874. His education was never completed, as he followed a natural inclination to go to sea before graduating from college. He sailed round the world four times, and during the Boer War took part in the transportation of troops. In 1901 he was a member of Scott's expedition, which reached "farthest south" at that time. After running for Parliament in 1906 and failing to be elected, he organized the expedition of 1908-09.

He was knighted by the British government for his services as an explorer, and has received many medals and other high honors.

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ROALD AMUNDSEN

TO accomplish that which for three centuries had been unsuccessfully attempted would satisfy most people. But not a man like Roald Amundsen, descendant of Vikings. To discover the Northwest Passage, long sought by Hudson, Cabot, Frobisher, Franklin, and other adventure-loving explorers, and to locate the exact position of the North Magnetic Pole, where the north end of the compass needle points, was not enough for this intrepid Norwegian. And so he set out for the South Pole —and reached it.

It was on March 8, 1912, that the entire world was electrified by the cablegram from Hobart, Tasmania, announcing the fact that, sometime between December 14 and 17, 1911, Captain Roald Amundsen had reached the South Pole. With four men and eighteen dogs from his ship, the Fram, Captain Amundsen crossed the great ice barrier and reached the southernmost point of the world in fifty-five days. According to the most accurate indication of his instruments, he was at the South Pole at three o'clock on the afternoon of December 14. On the vast plateau, 10,500 feet above the sea level, which the explorer named King Haakon Land, Amundsen unfurled the Norwegian flag.

Amundsen left Buenos Aires in South America late in 1910. It was in October, 1911, that the real "dash" for the South Pole began. Amundsen and four companions, with eighteen dogs, started southward. Shackleton's "farthest south," a point 111 miles from the Pole, was passed on December 8, six days before his goal was reached. Compared with the sufferings that other explorers have undergone, Amundsen's party had a comparatively easy time.

Captain Amundsen's whole career has been characterized by that unconquerable courage, perseverance, and patience which the fierce sea rovers of old had. Born at Borje, Norway, in 1872, he was educated for the naval service of Norway-Sweden, and became a second lieutenant. He was a born sailor. At the age of twenty-five he sailed with the Belgica expedition to the Antartic. He was first officer of this ship, which in 1897-99 explored the region west of Graham Land. In 1901 he made observations on the East Greenland Current which were considered very valuable.

It was after this that he decided to give the rest of his life if necessary to discovering the Northwest Passage. He sailed from Christiania, Norway, on June 17, 1903. After three years' wanderings through ice, rocks, and unknown lands he finally brought his little vessel, the Gjoa, through Bering Strait, thus being the first one to navigate the Northwest Passage. It was during this voyage that he also located the North Magnetic Pole.

Amundsen is considered one of the most daring and skilful of polar explorers; but he is very modest about his own great achievements.

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ROBERT F. SCOTT

BRAVE gentleman, gallant comrade, thoughtful of others even at the end,—so died Captain Robert F. Scott, conqueror of the Antarctic, and yet conquered by it. And no less credit is due his four companions, who perished courageously in one of the greatest polar tragedies the world has ever known. Robert Falcon Scott was born at Outlands, Davenport, England, in 1868. He entered the navy at the age of fourteen. In 1900-1904 he commanded the Discovery, and besides making a new "farthest south" record added greatly to scientific knowledge regarding the Antarctic region. He was promoted to captain, and in 1910 was given command of the ill-fated expedition on which he lost his life.

With four companions, Captain Scott on the final dash for the Pole left his main party in camp at Cape Evans, the base of operations on McMurdo Sound. On January 17, 1912, the South Pole was reached at last; but they found to their great amazement that they had been preceded by over a month by Amundsen and his party, who attained the Pole on December 14, 1911. The calculations of the two expeditions located the Pole on nearly the same spot.

Then Scott and his comrades began the return, which ended so tragically. Ill luck seemed to hover over them always. First Edgar Evans died as the result of a fall in which he received concussion of the brain. This tragedy left the remaining members of the party terribly shaken. Then Captain R. E. G. Oates, a military officer who had special charge of the ponies and dogs, became sick.

This slowed up the others, and fuel and food began to run low. Finally, on March 17, Oates became too sick to go on in the face of a raging blizzard. Although he begged them to push on and leave him, the other three bravely refused, when they knew that to remain was death to all. And then Oates coolly did that which will place his name high among the heroes of all time. Deliberately he walked away from camp in the swirling snow to death. His body was never found; but this inscription was erected to his memory:

> Hereabout died
> A Very Gallant Gentleman
> Capt. R. E. G. Oates
> Inniskillen Dragoons,
>
> who on the return from the Pole in March, 1912, willingly walked to his death in a blizzard to try and save his comrades beset by hardship.

Only eleven miles from food and shelter, the blizzard held the others imprisoned, and there they died. Their bodies and records were recovered on November 12 by a relief expedition from Cape Evans. Dr. Edward A. Wilson, chief of the scientific staff of the expedition, and Lieutenant H. R. Bowers, had died with Captain Scott. The burial service was read over the graves of the dead, and a cairn and a cross with their names was erected.

Captain Scott's last message, written at the door of death on March 25, 1912, shows the calm and uncomplaining heroism of the man, especially one passage:

"For my own sake I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardships, help one another, and meet death with as great fortitude as ever in the past. We took risks. We knew we took them. Things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint; but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last."

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